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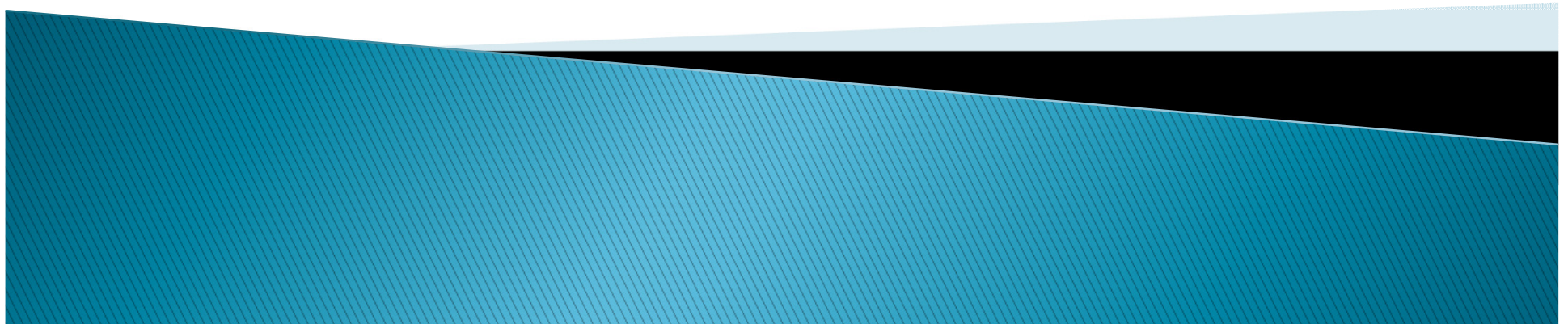
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Good practice and professional identity in early years practitioners

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The reflective practitioner

- ▶ “review, analyse and evaluate their own and others’ practice” (CWDC, 2008)
- ▶ Educated to graduate level
- ▶ Lead role in planning and delivering EYFS
- ▶ Model good practice to others

Reflection

- ▶ Process of noticing (Jaworski, 1993)
- ▶ Retrospective and critical (Proctor (1993) in Moon, 1999)
- ▶ Purposeful and focussed (Moon, 1999)
- ▶ An analysis of the effectiveness of practice and its values (Johns, 2004)

Voice (Belenky et al, 1986)

- ▶ Silence
- ▶ Received knowing
- ▶ Procedural knowing
- ▶ Subjective knowing
- ▶ Constructed knowing

Professional identity

- ▶ Professional knowledge
- ▶ Naive/informed belief
- ▶ Sophisticated understanding underpinned with theory
- ▶ Personal vs. professional

Methodology

- ▶ Semi-structured interviews
- ▶ Thematic analysis
- ▶ Voice Centred Relational Method (Mauthner and

Doucet(1998):

- Reading for the plot
- Reading for the voice of I

Results – thematic analysis

- ▶ Good practice is:
 - Child-centred/child-led (4)
 - Requires personal commitment and caring disposition (4)
 - Measured in terms of child's outcomes (5)
 - Shaped and measured by external frameworks (4)
 - Measured by others (3)
 - May be dynamic and shaped by context (2)

Results – thematic analysis

- ▶ Own performance is judged by using:
 - Reflection and reflective models
 - The judgement of others in the workplace
 - The use of external frameworks
 - Outcomes for children

Results – reading for the plot

- ▶ Confirmation of thematic analysis
- ▶ No reference to underpinning theory to support concepts
- ▶ Some articulation of personal values
- ▶ Concepts expressed in naive/unsophisticated terms

Results – reading for the voice of I

- ▶ “I” used to express personal experience and opinion
- ▶ “they” or “you” used to discuss good practice
- ▶ Informant 1 – uses “I” to discuss own practice, “you” to discuss external frameworks, e.g. learning outcomes, practice guidance
- ▶ Informant 4 – very reluctant to use “I” at all, even when discussing own practice

Conclusions - the voice of the practitioner

- ▶ Informants in this study show evidence of:
 - Received knowing
 - Subjective knowing
 - Procedural knowing
- ▶ Voice of the practitioner is still victimic but becoming more agentic
- ▶ Informants express naive/unsophisticated concepts of good practice and the use of reflection

Conclusions – supporting these learners

- ▶ If the early years practitioner is to acquire a credible professional identity then subjective, intuitive concepts of good practice need to be expressed with greater reference to underpinning theory
- ▶ This in turn will support them to lead on and model informed practice and understanding, raising the professional knowledge and skill-base of the sector

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